

(b) if so, the reasons for which a number of officers are yet to join their assignments and they are not being relieved; and

(c) by when Government propose to direct the concerned Departments to relieve the transferred officers immediately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING AND DEPARTMENT OF PENSIONS AND PENSIONERS WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The transfers have already taken effect in respect of 199 officers out of a total 214 transferred. Out of the remaining 15 officers, one has proceeded on training and another has taken voluntary retirement. Instructions have been issued for the immediate implementation of the rest of the transfers.

Fluctuation in Poverty Rate

†*395. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:

SHRI K.M.KHAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poverty rate declined to 30 per cent from 36 per cent during the period from 1989-90 to 1995-96 while it has again increased to 34.6 per cent during 1996-97;

(b) the reasons for this fluctuation;

(c) what methodology is adopted to determine the poverty line;

(d) whether it is also a fact that development of cities has stopped due to this rapid increase in poverty; and

(e) the steps Government are taking to boost the urban development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) The Planning Commission estimates the percentage of persons living below the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

poverty line at national and state level from the large sample surveys on consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The estimates of poverty are available for the years 1987-88, 1993-94 and 1999-2000 based on the National Sample Survey data on consumer expenditure of the 43rd, 50th and 55th Round respectively. As such, the estimates of the percentage of persons living below the poverty line in the year 1989-90, 1995-96 and 1996-97 are not available.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Planning Commission, based on the recommendations of the Expert Group on Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor (Lakdawala Committee), uses state-specific poverty lines in order to estimate the incidence of poverty. These state-wise poverty lines are derived from the national level poverty lines, using state-specific price indices and inter-state price differentials. The national poverty lines are expressed as monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs.49.09 in rural areas and Rs.56.64 in urban areas at 1973-74 prices corresponding to a basket of goods and service anchored on a norm of per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal in rural areas and 2100 kcal in urban areas.

(d) The Planning Commission has estimated the incidence of urban poverty from the large sample surveys on consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). These are given in the Table below. As may be seen, there is no evidence of increase in urban poverty.

Year	Percentage of People Living Below the Poverty Line in Urban Areas
1973-74	49.01
1977-78	45.24

Year	Percentage of People Living Below the Poverty Line in Urban Areas
1983	40.79
1987-88	38.20
1993-94	32.36
1999-2000	23.62

(e) Although there has been a declining trend in the poverty estimate in the urban areas, there has also been phenomenal growth in urban population during the past five decades. The level of urbanisation which was 11 to 12% during the first three decades of this century increased noticeably from 17.3% in 1951 to 25.7% in 1991. The major urban concern is the growing gap between the demand and supply of basic infrastructure services like safe drinking water, sanitation, sewerage, housing, energy, transport, communication, health, education etc. Increased urbanisation is accompanied by severe environmental problems which adversely affect the quality of life of urban population. In view of above, an integrated urban management policy incorporating different facets like development planning, resource mobilization, capacity building, responsive administration etc. is being examined in the process of formulating the Tenth Five Year Plan.

Cost of agricultural produce

*396. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the agricultural products being encouraged to reduce the cost of agricultural produce while achieving self-sufficiency; and

(b) what are future projections to contain large scale import of edible oils?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Country achieved self-sufficiency in foodgrains production long ago and have registered all time record production of